

**ANG****Bayan**

Pahayagan ng Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas
Pinapatnubayan ng Marxismo-Leninismo-Maoismo

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Editorial

Punish the fascist criminals

The Communist Party of the Philippines and the New People's Army condemn in the strongest possible terms the unbridled, relentless and intensified campaign of killings and abductions of leaders and activists of legal democratic parties, mass organizations and alliances of workers, peasants, youth and students, professionals and other democratic classes and sectors.

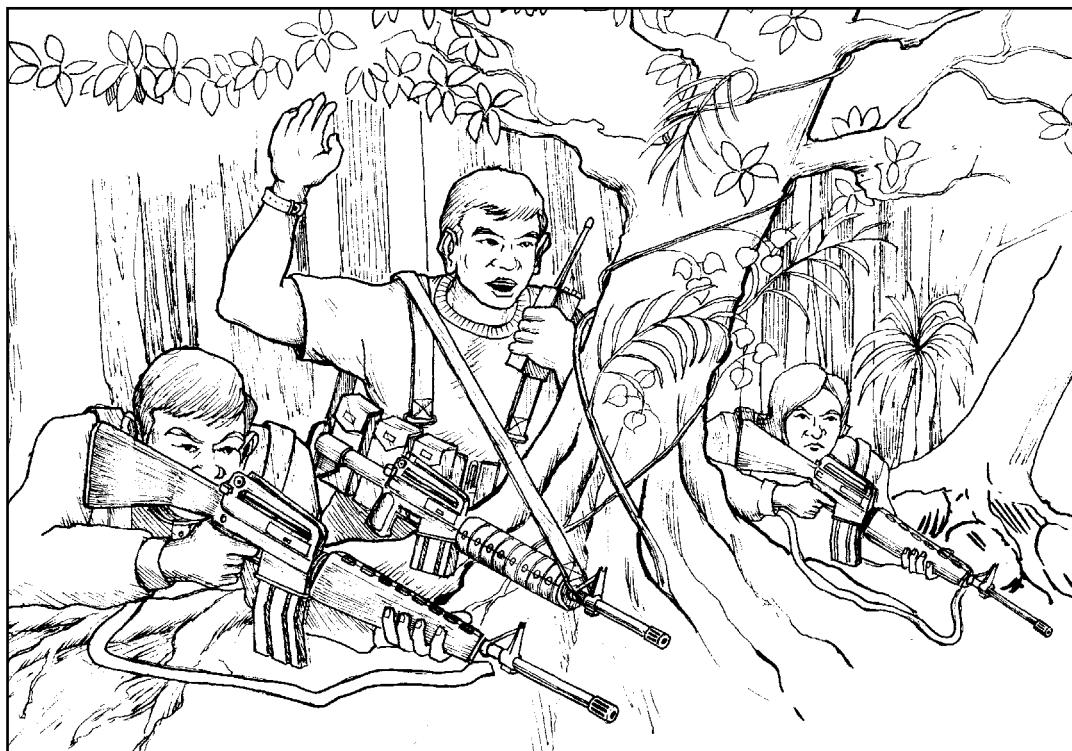
Hundreds of victims, all of them unarmed and defenseless have been brutally attacked and killed by death squads controlled by the AFP and PNP high commands and intelligence units.

The murder of Sotero Llamas, which took place despite widespread condemnation by democratic public opinion both within and outside the country is the latest proof of the utter disregard for humanitarian and civilized norms, overweening arrogance and abuse of authority and the insane blood lust of the state's licensed killers and the ruling Arroyo regime that commands and controls them.

The revolutionary movement firmly believes that the puppet and fascist Arroyo regime is criminally liable for mas-

terminding, planning and ordering vicious attacks against its unarmed political adversaries. With Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's orders and blessings, the current bloodbath is being planned, organized and directed by her cabinet's national security cluster led by former Gen. Eduardo Ermita with fanatical anti-communists Norberto Gonzales, Raul Gonzalez, Avelino Cruz, Gen. Generoso Senga of the AFP and Gen. Arturo Lomibao of the PNP as members.

In its desperate attempt to cling to power attained through massive fraud and malversation of public funds, the ruling Arroyo regime has been



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highlights...***

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**NPA seizes 3 rifles,
kills 5 soldiers
in Kalinga**

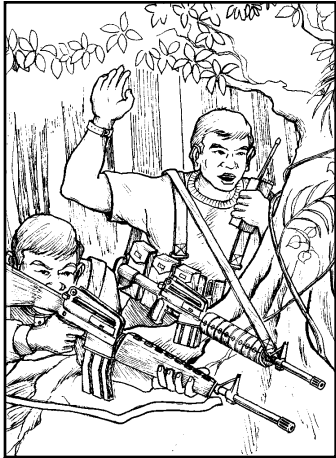
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resorting to naked fascist terrorism to paralyze and cause the disintegration of legal democratic parties and organizations and others actively advocating the fake president's ouster.

The victims and their families can never hope to attain justice from the fascist police and military, Congress and other reactionary state agencies that serve as sanctuaries for those who mastermind, support and cover up the campaign of political killings.

It is the obligation of the Communist Party and the New People's Army to attain revolutionary justice for them. The Party and people's army will do its utmost to make the fascist criminals who planned, ordered and executed the vicious killings to answer to justice and punish them.

We call on all victims, their sympathizers and everyone desirous of stopping the rampaging fascists in power to give information and provide assistance through various means to identify, arrest and punish the fascist criminals from the paid triggermen to their masterminds and controllers at the highest levels. The Party and the



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NPA will hold in the strictest confidence the identities of all those who extend assistance and see to their safety.


No amount of fascist brutality and evil can break the people's resolve and compel them to submit to fascists, puppets and tyrants big and small who lord it over the country. Such fascist madness does not signify strength but grave fear and desperation on the part of a regime that is much despised by the broad masses of the people. The fascist Arroyo clique has merely deepened the rut it is already in and that will eventually be its grave.

The legal parties, mass organi-

zations and alliances are perfectly within their democratic rights in asserting and fighting for their legitimate right to organize, express themselves and compete with other parties and forces in accordance with the rules and processes of the reactionary ruling system. By barefacedly violating the reactionary system's own laws and processes, the rabid reactionaries and fascists betray their true anti-democratic, antimasses and antinational character.

It is but right to further expand and strengthen the struggle to overthrow the fascist and puppet Arroyo regime as its armed minions engage in a mounting frenzy of killings and repression against legal organizations and personalities. Anti-Arroyo forces must determinedly expand alliances, intensify protests and heighten their campaigns and struggles in all arenas to hasten the regime's downfall and put an end to its reign of terror and greed.

More than ever, the subjugated and oppressed masses clearly see the urgent need to advance and intensify the armed revolutionary struggle. Only armed revolution can overthrow the corrupt reactionary semicolonial and semifeudal system and thereby thoroughly resolve the chronic crisis that has wrought tremendous suffering on the people and the country. **AB**

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The US-Arroyo regime's dirty war

The series of killings and abductions of legal personalities and the wholesale attacks on the legal democratic movement are key components of the Armed Forces of the Philippines' current operational plan Oplan Bantay Laya (OBL).

The military has ferociously attacked progressive and democratic forces it claims to be part of the political infrastructure of the armed revolutionary movement. Since 2001, and especially since 2003, it has targeted those it suspects of sympathizing with the CPP, NPA and NDF. The AFP's OBL focuses intelligence and data gathering efforts on target personalities, especially leaders of mass organizations and alliances it accuses as "legal fronts of the NDF." The data gathered are passed on to tactical and combat units who formulate an order of battle (or a hitlist of targets to liquidate).

The AFP thus makes no distinction in its treatment of armed and unarmed or underground and aboveground organizations. The ISAFP enforces a quota for each Military Intelligence Group under its command on the number of target personalities to be killed.

This plan is readily obvious in the AFP's various internal and public documents. In 2005, the AFP disseminated among its ranks a document titled "Knowing the Enemy" where it named organizations such as Bayan and Bayan Muna as partners of the CPP. The document states that it is the AFP's duty to neutralize the hierarchy of alliances that allegedly creates conditions for revolution.

The book *Trinity of War 3* published by the AFP's Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM) as a guide for its field unit commanders has the same content. It underscores the concept of defeating the NPA by

destroying its base of mass support.

The AFP also issued in 2004 two internal documents entitled "Target Research on Sectoral Organizations" and "Institutionalizing the Conduct of Target Research as a Major Component in the Intelligence Project Preparation, in Particular, and Intelligence Cycle Process, in General." Both documents identify legal mass organizations and progressive partylist organizations as targets of military and police intelligence operations.

The killings perpetrated by the AFP's death squads are patterned after the "new operational arts"—the methods and tactics of the US Special Forces. The "new operational arts" serve to guide clandestine operations of US commando units in other countries and include methods and tactics used by the US special forces in covert killings and abductions of patriotic forces as well as enemies of the US' local puppets. The 2006 US Quadrennial Defense Review greatly enhances, provides funding for and calls for more numerous and more extensive special forces operations as the US and its allies respond to so-called non-traditional threats.

This concept served as the operational framework for Operation Phoenix, a fascist terror campaign in Vietnam in 1967-74 that claimed the lives of more than 400,000 Vietnamese. The same operational concept was used by

the CIA and Pentagon in their operations in other parts of Asia; in Central and South American countries like Nicaragua, El Salvador and Guatemala; in Yugoslavia; and Africa. It was known as the Salvadoran Option during El Salvador's civil war. A version named Operation Gladio was used in Germany, Italy, Norway, Greece and other European nations after World War II. These operations included espionage, identification of targets for surveillance and arrest, accumulating dossiers on suspected communists and sympathizers and killing, abducting and terrorizing them.

While regular US troops implemented Operation Phoenix, the US organized and incited European anti-communist groups and used them as local tools to crush European communists. In the Salvadoran Option, spying, identification and listing of targets and assassinations were not always done by uniformed or identifiable personnel or by US troops.

These operations mimicked by Oplan Bantay Laya grossly violate all human rights. They use methods that are in absolute violation of international rules of war.

Oplan Bantay Laya assumes that the assassination of leaders and activists of the legal patriotic and democratic mass movement will crush what it deems the political infrastructure of the revolutionary movement. Oplan Bantay Laya will only succeed in intensifying the people's anger and push them down the path of armed revolution.





Norberto Gonzales and Raul Gonzalez

Kingsize liars

The Arroyo regime's brutal fascist attacks on the people go hand in glove with the weaving of lies and bloody intrigues against the revolutionary movement and Arroyo's enemies. Their intent is to cover up the regime's criminal liabilities; justify repressive measures; vilify, divide and derail the forces arrayed against the regime; and weaken the people's fighting resolve.

The noisiest trumpeters of the regime's psywar campaign are National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez. It is Norberto Gonzales and other members of the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security (COC-IS) who draft the psywar campaign plans. Raul Gonzalez, on the other hand, is in charge of fabricating cases, pressuring judges and hatching legal tricks to justify the arrest of the regime's enemies.

Spokespersons of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Philippine National Police (PNP) follow their lead. Whatever lie they spew is repeated and elaborated upon by military officials who manufacture evidence in their "intelligence reports" to support

the stories woven by Gonzales.

Bloody intrigues. To shirk responsibility for the killings, the Arroyo regime made up the story that the assassinations are actually part of a purge in the CPP and the NPA. "Task Force Usig" was formed to conduct a sham investigation and gloss over the regime's role in the killings. Even before any investigation could take place, the PNP announced that at least 13 leaders and members of progressive organizations killed since 2001 were allegedly victims of a purge within the revolutionary ranks.

The regime is using this same excuse to deny responsibility over the recent killing of Sotero Llamas. The regime maliciously made up the story that there is bad blood between the revolutionary move-

ment and Llamas. Malacañang claims Llamas was not a target because he was helping government by serving as a consultant for the peace talks. But Llamas was a consultant of the NDFP and not the government. Malacañang's twisted logic could not explain why a person they claim to be a friend was listed among the 49 people it has accused of rebellion and plotting a coup d'état.

The AFP also claims that the CPP-NPA is behind the killing of Noel Capulong, deputy secretary general of Bayan Muna in Southern Tagalog.

Relatives and friends of Capulong and Llamas decry the intrigues and lies spewed by the AFP's fascist spokesmen. Even the PNP's investigation in Albay points to an operative of the ISAFP in Llamas' killing.

The AFP 5th ID also sowed the intrigue that Ilocos Bayan Muna coordinator Romeo Sanchez was killed by the NPA in March 2005 as part of a purge of revisionist traitors. The spokesman of the 502nd Brigade has also claimed that Bayan Muna members Elena Mendiola and Ricardo Balauag were shot and killed by the NPA on May 10 in Echague, Isabela, contrary to witnesses' statements that one of their killers was a soldier based in an AFP camp in Barangay Suyong, Echague.

Norberto Gonzales again fanned rumors of a purge when he announced on May 21 that the bodies of 18 people allegedly killed by the NPA had been found in three Bukidnon towns. Gonzales' claims were denied by both Bukidnon Gov. Jose Ma. Zubiri and the 403rd Bde, the supposed source of the information.

Assassination plot against Arroyo. Malacañang has likewise fabricated a story about an assassination plot against Arroyo and

some of her key officials. To make the story look real, the AFP was to present alleged NPA member Philip Limjoco whom AFP operatives abducted last May 7. The AFP refuses to present Limjoco to the public and continues to torture him to force him to be part of the regime's psywar campaign.

Failing to use Limjoco, the AFP instead produced Delfin de Guzman, a civilian abducted by the military from his house in Norzagaray, Bulacan on May 11. De Guzman was presented to the media after ten days in custody. The AFP claimed that de Guzman heads the NPA's Special Operations Group (SOG) and is secretary of the CPP Bulacan provincial committee.

These lies are being woven to implicate all those who oppose the regime. After presenting de Guzman, the ISAFP abducted, held incommunicado and tortured five leaders of the pro-Estrada Union of the Masses for Democracy and Justice (UMDJ). The AFP was forced to release them after three days, but not before filing charges of rebellion against them. The AFP claimed

that de Guzman identified one of the accused as among those involved in an assassination plot against Arroyo. The AFP arrogantly refuses to let any of its operatives involved in the abduction and torture appear before a Senate investigation. The AFP refuses to even reveal the names of the operatives.

Putting pressure on the PGBI. To split the ranks of the anti-Arroyo forces, the regime has likewise implicated former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan and his group the Philippine Guardians Brotherhood, Inc. (PGBI) in the killings of activists and media personnel.

Police Dir. Marcelo Ele claims that Rommel Lirazana, one of the seven accused in the killing of *Saksi* photojournalist Albert Orsolino, is a PGBI member. He presented as proof a PGBI sweatshirt allegedly found among Lirazana's belongings. Ele has also implicated the PGBI in the killings of Llamas and many others. The PGBI strongly denies that Lirazana is a member of their group. **AB**

Interview with Ka Salud Roja

The US-Arroyo regime's fascist crimes in Central Luzon

Ang Bayan interviewed CPP Central Luzon spokesperson Ka Salud Roja in May on the killing spree by the US-Arroyo regime's death squads in the region. Central Luzon has suffered one of the highest numbers of killings and abductions in the country.

There are to date 109 cases of killings, attempted murders and abductions of leaders and members of progressive organizations in Central Luzon, 71 of which took place in 2005. From January to May 2006, there were 37 killings in the region.

The brutal killings intensified after the AFP leadership declared Central Luzon a priority area. "From Southern Tagalog in 2001-2004, the AFP turned its attention to Eastern Visayas and Central Luzon starting in the second half of 2004," Ka Salud said.

The attacks became especially fierce after two of the regime's most rabid butchers, Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan of the 7th ID and Maj. Gen. Romeo Tolentino of the Northern Luzon Command (NOLCOM), were deployed in the region.

Most of the regime's victims were peasants. "They comprised 62% of victims in 2005 and 83% of in the first quarter of 2006," added Ka Salud. In 2005, 13% of cases victimized semiworkers, and 25% involved the middle classes.

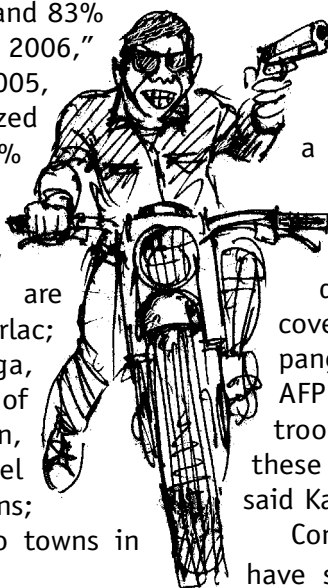
The AFP's priority areas in Central Luzon are Hacienda Luisita in Tarlac; southeastern Pampanga, particularly the town of Mexico; eastern Bulacan, particularly San Miguel and San Ildefonso towns; and Guimba and Cuyapo towns in Nueva Ecija.

A battalion of Special Operations Teams augmented by CAFGU are deployed in each of these areas.

"This doesn't come close to the six battalions deployed in Mindoro and eight battalions deployed in Batangas in 2002-2004. But given the flat terrain and dense population in these areas, even a single battalion can inflict severe harm on the people," Ka Salud said.

The AFP has deployed a battalion to cover the ten barangays comprising Hacienda Luisita. It has also deployed a battalion to cover 23 of Mexico, Pampanga's 44 barrios. "The AFP has assigned half of its troops in the region to these four priority areas," said Ka Salud.

Consequently, these areas have suffered the most killings, abductions and torture cases. "In sum, 90% of cases in 2005 and 77.5% of cases in 2006



occurred in Nueva Ecija, Bulacan, Tarlac, and Pampanga," Ka Salud explained.

There were also three incidents of arson, seven incidents of illegal arrest and detention and 223 incidents of harassment and illegal searches in different barrios of the region.

"The Party and the NPA in Central Luzon have sufficient evidence against officers and units of the AFP and the death squads responsible for the killings,

abductions, torture, illegal arrests and detention. Those responsible for crimes against the people will be punished in due time," Ka Salud warned.

Moreover, there is sufficient evidence to prove that some members of a prominent landlord family in Tarlac conspired with the military, police and hired killers to perpetrate the fascist killings. A case against them has been filed at the appropriate level of the people's court. **AB**

Rampant killings and abuses

The Arroyo regime's violations of human rights continue unabated. Aside from Sotero Llamas and the "Erap 5," 21 other persons were victimized by the fascist state's armed minions from May to the first week of June.

June 4. A hooded assailant armed with an M16 shot and killed David Costuna, 48 and Arcadio Macale, 60 in Barangay Balud, Borongan, Eastern Samar. Costuna was a Bayan Muna member and Macale a peasant leader who also served as village chair of Barangay Balud. They were shot at close range while attending the wake of Costuna's godchild. The killer escaped aboard a motorcycle.

May 31. Elements of the 56th IB arrested, detained and interrogated for one and a half hours three youths named Mark, 18, Karen, 19, and Doreen, 20 in Barangay Binagbag, Angat, Bulacan. The soldiers threatened to kill them and likewise threatened to rape the women. The three youths were arrested while distributing leaflets entitled "We Thirst for Peace" that criticized military abuses especially after Maj. Gen. Jovito Palparan took over the 7th ID. The three are members of the Catholic church's Parish Youth Committee in Norzagaray town.

May 29. An AFP death squad killed former CPP-NPA Bicol chief and former NDFP peace talks consultant Sotero Llamas. Llamas, also former Bayan Muna director for political affairs was shot aboard his van in Tabaco City, Albay. His

driver was wounded in the attack. The assailants escaped aboard two motorcycles.

May 28. Elements of the 61st IB based in Barangay Andulaan, Ilog, Negros Occidental abducted Roberto Marapo, suspected leader of Guerrilla Front 3 in Negros, and Dionelo Borres, a peasant from Barangay Camindangan, Sipalay City. Witnesses say that four armed men forced the victims to board a silver-colored van. Two of the armed men were identified as intelligence operatives of the 61st IB. Marapo and Borres remain missing.

May 27. Two armed men aboard a motorcycle killed Bayan-Southern Tagalog regional coordinator and Bayan Muna official Noel Capulong. He was shot while driving his jeep in Parian Village, Calamba City. Capulong was the 258th activist and fourth high-ranking Bayan leader killed since Arroyo assumed power in 2001.

May 22-25. ISAFP operatives illegally arrested, held incommunicado and tortured five leaders of the Union of the Masses for Justice and Peace (UMJP). The AFP only admitted arresting the victims two days after. The five victims revealed to the media details of the torture they suffered in the

hands of the military. They also said they were being forced to claim that they were abducted by the NPA and later rescued by the AFP. The AFP insists that one of the victims, 60-year-old Ruben Dionisio who suffered the worst torture, is a member of the NPA Special Operations Group.

May 16. Two elements of the 11th IB killed Peter Angkon, Anakbayan organizer at the Hilatain Community High School in Guihulngan, Negros Oriental. The killers escaped aboard a motorcycle.

May-June. Various leaders, organizers, and supporters of progressive forces reported being subjected to continuing harassment and surveillance. Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas secretary general Danilo Ramos reported being subjected to police surveillance since May 2. Two men aboard a motorcycle have also consistently been tailing Jobert Pahilga, who lawyers for Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano and farmworkers of Hacienda Luisita. Elements of the 48th IB have likewise threatened Nueva Ecija UCCP pastors Virgilio and Beatriz Perido on May 27-28. The threats were issued after both pastors refused to surrender Virgilio's daughter Aprilyn, an urban poor organizer. Fr. Renato Respicio of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente in Sto. Domingo, Nueva Ecija and his secretary Angelina Hasa also both received unsigned death threats that warned them to stop their organizing activities. **AB**

Escalating US armed intervention in the Philippines

Filipinos must actively oppose an agreement that has led to the formation of the Security Engagement Board (SEB). The agreement signed by the US government and the Arroyo regime on May 24 is another affront to Philippine national sovereignty. It fosters intensified US armed intervention in the country and further transforms the Philippines into a virtual US military base.

The SEB is a consultative group headed by the AFP chief of staff and the commander of the US Pacific Command that would supervise US-RP security cooperation based on a broadened definition of the term "security". While the Mutual Defense Treaty (MDT) of 1956 addressed so-called "traditional" security issues such as threats of a foreign military invasion, the new agreement now covers "non-traditional threats" such as terrorism, drug trafficking and piracy and disasters such as floods, typhoons, earthquakes and epidemics.

These new definitions and issues suddenly came into the picture after the US Department of Defense ordered security arrangements between the US and its puppet states attuned to the new global US military strategy as stipulated in the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). Under the

QDR, the US military will give emphasis on the "war on terror and irregular warfare activities, including long-duration unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency and military support for stabilization and reconstruction efforts."

The inclusion of "non-traditional issues," most of which have nothing to do with security or military concerns, removes all possible obstacles to the entry and operations of US combat troops anywhere in the Philippines. It provides basis for expanding and intensifying US military intervention in the Philippines and puts the US in a better position to fight nationalist, democratic and anti-imperialist struggles in various countries, which comprise the QDR's main focus.

The US and the Arroyo puppet regime rushed the signing of the agreement and the formation of the SEB without the knowledge of the Senate and the public. Malacañang announced the signing of the agreement only after the SEB had already been formed, claiming that the accord is merely an extension of the Mutual Defense Treaty, not a new treaty that needed Senate approval. Thus, the regime dodged the constitutional provision requiring the Senate's review and ratification of all international treaties and

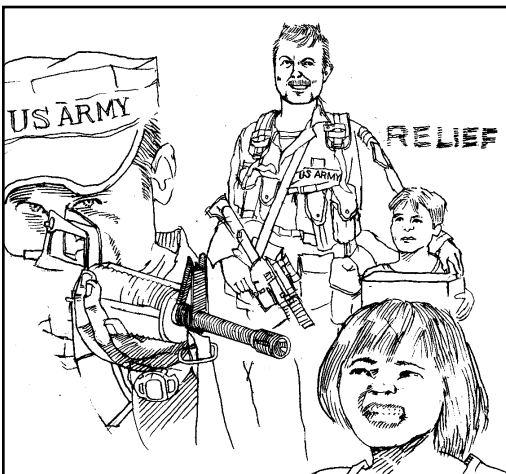
agreements before they could be implemented.

The SEB is the latest of several US ploys since the mid-1990s to intensify its military intervention in the country. The US used the Abu Sayyaf in the 1990s to justify the entry of its combat troops under the framework of the MDT and the Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA). This, despite the fact that the Abu Sayyaf, a bandit group involved in kidnap-for-ransom activities in Mindanao, is an internal issue. The US claimed its troops only provided training and advice to Philippine troops as well as humanitarian assistance to people in areas where the Abu Sayyaf operates. In fact, US troops were also engaged in combat operations.

Since then, Malacañang has allowed the entry of US armed troops under the guise of joint military exercises and humanitarian missions into areas where no traditional security threats exist. Aside from Abu Sayyaf areas, US troops have also entered suspected NPA guerrilla fronts. The Arroyo regime and the US have also used the massive landslide and two strong typhoons that hit Aurora and northern Quezon in late 2004 and the landslide in Southern Leyte in February 2006 as pretexts for the entry of US troops. US troops ostensibly engaged in civic operations when in fact they also spied, conducted mapping operations, familiarized themselves with the area, and provided intelligence data and military advice to AFP troops operating against local revolutionary forces.

The formation of the SEB signals the intensification of US armed intervention in the Philippines especially in the face of the Arroyo regime's failure to prevent the growth of the armed revolutionary movement.

AB



Classroom shortages and a measly education budget

Tuition fee hikes, classroom shortages, a lack of teachers, books and facilities. Students bear the brunt of these problems that worsen every year because of the incompetent regime's refusal to solve them. Yet the regime has the gall to brag that it has solved the problem of classroom shortages.

Classroom shortages. Gloria Arroyo berated acting Department of Education (DepEd) Sec. Fe Hidalgo on national television during a cabinet meeting on May 30, when Hidalgo reported a shortage of 6,832 classrooms. Hidalgo based her report on the ratio of 45 students per classroom, a standard that has long been followed by the DepEd and the defunct Department of Education, Culture and Sports.

Arroyo publicly humiliated Hidalgo for supposedly citing the wrong figures. Arroyo cited a previous agreement with Hidalgo to "remedy" the classroom shortage by increasing the student-classroom ratio to 100:1 by resorting to double shifts where two classes would use a classroom for half a day each. Thus, through Arroyo's hocus-pocus, the shortage would fall to a mere thousand.

The browbeaten Hidalgo abjectly retracted her data that same day and averred that there was no longer any classroom shortage at all.

Former DepEd Usec. Juan Miguel Luz, however, asserted that there is an actual shortage of 74,115 classrooms based on the single-shift standard of 45 students to a classroom. Furthermore, Luz said that Hidalgo's 6,832 figures is already based on the double-shift arrangement of two classes of 50 students each.

Besides the classroom shortage, many existing classrooms are

dilapidated and unsafe. According to the DepEd's Third Elementary Education Project (TEEP), only 6,098 of 55,778 classrooms in 23 provinces in 1999 were in good condition, and 7,098 were beyond repair. By June 2005, only 14,184 of 42,582 damaged classrooms had been repaired.

Measly education budget. The regime allotted a paltry P119.1 billion for the DepEd in the 2006 national budget. This is supposedly P7.1 billion bigger than last year's budget. In fact, the DepEd's budget share fell by 27.9% in

2005 compared to 2004.

Budget Sec. Rolando Andaya Jr. boasted that the government is allotting P17 billion for new classrooms and public school teachers, allegedly the biggest allocation in the last several years. A closer look at the P1.05-trillion 2006 national budget would reveal, however, that a scandalous P723 billion has been automatically allocated for debt servicing.

The TEEP estimates that it would cost P442,800 to construct a 63-square meter classroom that is painted, has a ceiling, and is equipped with plumbing and electricity. Using this as standard cost, P32.08 billion would be needed to fill the 74,115 classroom deficit—a far cry from the P723 billion doled out for debt payments.

The education budget is merely 2.4% of the GDP, compared to the average 4.41% set aside by countries at par with the Philippines, according to the United Nations. **AB**

Soaring school fees

Ninety-seven of 270 private colleges and universities in Metro Manila raised tuition and other fees this school year. Up to 52 high schools likewise increased tuition fees by 10% in Manila, Quezon City and other cities in the national capital.

In Bicol, 24 colleges and universities were allowed to hike tuition fees by an average of 13.7% or P44.70 per unit. In the Caraga region, 34 of 53 colleges in its four provinces hiked their tuition fees by at least 7.6%. In Baguio City, seven of 14 colleges and universities also raised their fees. A total of 458 or 32% of the 1,465 private colleges nationwide applied for tuition fee hikes this year.

According to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), schools are allowed to increase their rates without consultation as long as these do not exceed the official inflation rate that currently stands at 7.6%. In reality, this policy provides tacit license for schools to increase their fees every year.

With such big earnings, at least eight private schools are now among the Philippines' Top 1000 corporations: Centro Escolar University, Mapua Institute of Technology, Far Eastern University, University of the East, Philippine Maritime Institute, Technological Institute of the Philippines, AMA Computer University and STI College. **AB**

An effective tool in mass campaigns

Art and literature are effective tools for advancing the revolution. This was proven once again by the NPA and a cultural group in 2003 during an antifeudal mass campaign in a guerrilla front in Bicol. The Red fighters and the group of cultural activists were able to come up with a proper and well-developed orientation for cultural work, applying it successfully in a campaign to reduce the *resiko**.

It was a breakthrough experience in the use of various art and theatrical forms to invigorate a mass campaign. The NPA and the cultural group also gained invaluable experience in organizing cultural groups in the locality.

To meet the propaganda needs of the campaign, a cultural show was to be presented at the rally and vigil on the day coconut farmers were to confront a merchant with their demands. The NPA and the cultural group wrote the song "Resikada" based on the popular ditty "Spaghetti Song" often played over the radio.

The young members of the cultural group gathered in one of the most consolidated barrios covered by the mass campaign. They taught the people the song and dance they would be presenting at the rally. With the help of some NPA guerrillas, the cultural group gradually learned creative means of animating the mass campaign.

The show presented by the cultural group during the first rally in early September 2003 was a hit. It was well received by the peasant masses and even the mass media that covered the campaign.

During the campaign's first wave, the trader refused to reduce the *resiko* from more than 25% to the 15% demanded by the peasants.

Consequently, the masses boycotted the trader. A second rally-

confrontation was planned. Aside from the youth, many other persons volunteered to participate in the cultural show. The cultural group and some NPA guerrillas helped the youth sing peasant songs and recite Amado V. Hernandez's poem "Kung Tuyo na ang Luha mo, Aking Bayan."

The peasants won the second round of confrontation. An agreement reducing the amount of *resiko* was signed. Both the campaign and the youth and peasants' lively presentations were a resounding success. From this experience, the cultural group and the NPA guerrillas saw the role of the arts in advancing revolutionary work in the countryside.

This helped in enlivening other



mass campaigns. The experience showed how popular art forms appropriately transformed through progressive and revolutionary content could be very effective. Classic revolutionary songs and literary works, such as the marches and love songs from the album *Mga Kanta ng Rebolusyong Pilipino* and the creations of famous poets Amado Hernandez** and Carlos Bulosan*** were once more popularized.

The lessons learned from the campaign formed the basis for developing the appropriate orientation for cultural work in the countryside.

AB

**Resiko* refers to the percentage arbitrarily shaved off by merchants from the price of copra when the copra's moisture content allegedly exceeds the standard 12%.

**Amado V. Hernandez (1903-1970) was a patriotic labor leader and prize-winning poet, novelist and journalist.

***Carlos Bulosan (1913-1956) was a poet and short story writer who served as a union organizer in various US plantations. He was part of the first wave of migrant Filipinos who tried their luck in the US in the 1920s to the 1950s. He was a member of the Communist Party of the USA.

NPA seizes 3 rifles, kills 5 soldiers in Kalinga

FIVE soldiers were killed and four others were wounded in three tactical offensives launched in the last week of May by Red fighters of the Lejo Cawilan Command (LCC) of the New People's Army in Kalinga.

Three elements of the 21st IB Charlie Coy were killed in an ambush on the morning of May 28 in Sitio Supac, Barangay Daoangan, Balbalan. The Red fighters did not suffer any casualties. LCC spokesperson Ka Tipon Gil-ayab said the NPA seized two M16s, an M203 grenade launcher, two rifle grenades, a dozen 40 mm grenades and hundreds of rounds

of ammunition.

That same morning, another LCC unit launched harassment operations on a Philippine Army and CAFGU detachment in Barangay Taga, Pinukpuk. Two soldiers were killed and four others wounded, including two CAFGU elements.

Earlier, on May 25, the Red fighters burned down another military detachment in Aguinaldo Hill, Barangay Asibanglan, Pinukpuk. The detachment was abandoned by soldiers in fear of continuing NPA attacks and the villagers' animosity toward the military.

Armed actions in Sorsogon

AFP troops reaped one defeat after another in successive military actions launched by the Celso Minguez Command of the New People's Army (NPA) in Sorsogon on May 15-19. Six enemy forces were killed, including a hitman of an AFP death squad, and at least 11 others were wounded in these armed actions.

In a statement, Romulo Jallos Command spokesperson Ka Jose Buenaobra said that the NPA in Sorsogon launched a partisan operation, a sniping operation, six harassment operations and a counter-ambush.

The enemy sustained the biggest casualties on May 17 when a four-person NPA team successfully outmaneuvered a 15-man Philippine Army unit that had attempted to encircle them in Barangay Busay, Magallanes. The attacking military forces were taken by surprise when the guer-

rillas blasted them with a land mine and fired on them. Five enemy soldiers and two others were wounded. Eight other soldiers were wounded in four NPA harassment operations launched that same day in the towns of Magallanes, Bulan and Gubat.

Meanwhile, a soldier was wounded when a guerrilla team sniped at a 14-man enemy troop in Barangay San Juan Daan, Bulan on May 18. The enemy fired in frenzy at all directions and killed a civilian with their indiscriminate firing.

The NPA also punished on May 15 in Irosin town Domingo Habla, the prime hitman of an AFP death squad. The Romulo Jallos Command said that the punitive action is a big step towards achieving revolutionary justice for the killing of mass activists and members of progressive organiza-

Military actions in Mindoro, Agusan and Zamboanga

THE AFP suffered five casualties in three separate NPA military actions in Zamboanga del Sur, Occidental Mindoro and Agusan del Sur from May 25 to June 2. The guerrilla fighters also seized a rifle.

In Zamboanga del Sur, the NPA ambushed and killed a soldier of the 53rd IB in Barangay Lukoan, Lakewood on June 2, and seized the soldier's firearm.

A soldier and two CAFGU elements were wounded in Occidental Mindoro when the NPA raided the 8th IB detachment in Barangay Casague, Sta. Cruz on the night of May 28.

In Agusan del Sur, a CAFGU element was killed in an NPA harassment operation against the 23rd IB-CAFGU detachment in Barangay New Tubigon, Sibagat on May 25.

Harassment of Batasan 6 persists

THE Arroyo regime continues to persecute the Batasan 6. DOJ Sec. Raul Gonzalez has succeeded in bumping out the original judge handling their case, replacing her with Arroyo flunky Judge Encarnacion Moya of the Makati Regional Trial Court.

Moya promptly declared that there was probable cause to proceed with the rebellion case against Rep. Crispin Beltran. The regime is clearly setting the stage for the eventual conviction of the Batasan 6 for rebellion, and in the process demonize them and the parties they represent.

Wage hike bill stalled

THE pro-Arroyo majority in Congress sabotaged the near passage of the bill for a ₱125 wage increase by delaying its printing for the Congress' third and final reading before Congress closes on June 7.

Malacañang had earlier threatened a veto should the bill be passed into law, despite the fact that the bill was already a watered down version of the original. The bill provides that the ₱125 wage

increase be given in three yearly installments. Malacañang insists on relegating all decisions on wage issues to the antiworker regional wage boards.

Ironically, even if the workers do receive the entire ₱125 wage hike in one payment, the amount is still a pittance. Government's own statistics show that in Metro Manila, a family of six needs at least ₱640 daily to live decently.

PCGG negotiations on Marcos loot

VARIOUS sectors assailed the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG) for its amicable settlement with the Marcoses on the division of the former dictator's ill-gotten wealth.

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo and five other progressive lawmakers filed in Congress House Bill No. 1264 calling for an investigation into the reported settlement and prohibiting the withdrawal of criminal charges against Marcos family members in the name of "reconciliation."

The brewing settlement plot

was revealed to the public when PCGG Chairman Ricardo Abcede was photographed and caught on video dancing with Imelda Marcos at a party. Abcede admitted inviting Marcos' widow to his birthday party and said that this was part of the government's reconciliation efforts.

The planned settlement would hand over five to ten billion dollars worth of the Marcos loot to the Arroyo government, in exchange for a bigger amount to be returned to the Marcoses and the withdrawal of all charges against them.

Bribes to counter impeachment

NEW impeachment proceedings against Gloria Arroyo may take place with Malacañang's failure to push through with the cha-cha by July. The regime is frantically buying the loyalty of lawmakers to oppose the impeachment move. Anti-Arroyo congressmen revealed on June 5 that each pro-Arroyo lawmaker would be receiving an additional ₱7 million, aside from the ₱70 million "pork barrel" allotted for each congressman in

the 2006 national budget. In contrast, pro-impeachment lawmakers would have to pass through the eye of a needle to get their "pork barrel."

Rep. Rolex Suplico, one of those who voted for impeachment in 2005, said that the opposition received only half of the ₱70 million "pork barrel" received by pro-Arroyo lawmakers. Others, including Bayan Muna representatives, got almost nothing.

Cha-cha plot stymied

MALACAÑANG'S plotting to kick off the process of amending the constitution before Congress and the Senate reopen on July 24 have come to naught as a result of determined efforts by anti-Arroyo forces to frustrate the Arroyo regime at each and every turn.

Still, Press Sec. Ignacio Bunye announced on June 5 that Malacañang will resume the bout next year. He also expressed the wish that the 2007 elections would be voting for a new unicameral parliament.

The cha-cha debacle is a result of the pro-Arroyo lawmakers' failure to convince the senators to transform the upper and lower houses into a single constituent assembly. Malacañang's earlier attempts to launch cha-cha through a fake "people's initiative" had suffered a series of drawbacks.

Malacañang was trying to beat the May 25 deadline in compliance with the reactionary law's requisite 60-day deliberation period before any issue could be put up for a plebiscite. The regime wishfully thought that a plebiscite could be held by July and that a new unicameral parliament would open by then, instead of a separate Congress and Senate.

With no cha-cha in sight by July 24, Malacañang fears it could lose control over succeeding events, including a second bout of impeachment proceedings and the possibility that the opposition could gain the upper hand in the 2007 polls.

US Marines massacre 24 Iraqi civilians

TWELVE US Marine troopers massacred 24 Iraqi civilians in Haditha on November 19, 2005. The incident was covered up for four months until human rights advocates exposed it to the international media.

The massacre was a retaliatory action by a US Marine Corps patrol after a blast from a roadside bomb hit their Humvee vehicle, killing an American soldier. The next day, the US Marines publicly announced the death of the American soldier and 15 Iraqi civilians allegedly hit by the bomb. They further claimed that eight Iraqi rebels were killed in a firefight that ensued after the bombing.

The truth came out only in January 2006 when an Iraqi student sent a video to a human rights group in Iraq which in turn sent it to *Time Magazine*. The video showed the victims in a morgue and the houses where the killings occurred. The video clearly showed

that the victims were shot at in their own homes and were not killed in the bombing or the firefight.

US officials initially tried to cover up the incident by dismissing it as mere al Qaeda propaganda, but were later forced to conduct investigations.

In a *Time Magazine* article in March, civilian survivors of the massacre related how the American soldiers went berserk after one of their men got killed. The soldiers went on a shooting spree, killing the driver and four Iraqi students riding a nearby taxi. The soldiers then entered and ransacked three houses in the area and killed the occupants, including a group of children one to six years of age, a 65-year-old woman and an 80-year-old man in a wheelchair. The US military was forced to admit what has since been known as the Haditha Massacre after the *Time* article came out.

The battalion and company commanders of the units involved have been relieved of their command and the entire US Marines squad charged with murder and manipulating reports of the incident. None of the higher military officers who ordered the coverup has been charged, however.

Meanwhile, two other incidents of American soldiers killing Iraqi civilians have been bared. The latest is the killing on May 27 of two Iraqi women, one of whom was pregnant and about to give birth. The soldiers fired on the vehicle the women were riding when it failed to stop at a checkpoint in Samarra city because it was rushing the woman in labor to a hospital.

Earlier, in March, US Marines killed 11 civilians including five youths and four women in Ishaqi. The American soldiers then blasted the building along with the victims.

American soldiers kill 80 Afghani

AT least 80 Afghan civilians were reported killed by American soldiers on May 29.

About 30 civilians died when US occupation forces fired on hundreds of demonstrators in the Afghan capital city of Kabul. Al Jazeera television aired videos of American soldiers shooting at civil-

ians who were throwing stones at a US armored personnel carrier in protest of the US' invasion of their country.

In southern Afghanistan, at least 50 people were killed when US planes bombed a mosque in Helmand province.